

REMARKS

In this office action the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 7-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matthews et al. in view of Dickhart, III, et al.

The Examiner stated, "Note the previous discussion in paragraph 5 of paper 4, mailed 5-20-2002.

Re-claim 1 and 15, see Fig. 8 of Dickhart, III et al. Note donut shape (the ring at 78) and the legs 76.

Re-claim 8, the term 'enhanced' is relative and carries no patentable weight."

With respect to the Examiner's rejection of claims 1 and 15 under Matthews et al. in view of Dickhart, III, et al. wherein the Examiner refers to Fig. 8 of Dickhart, Applicant must disagree with the Examiner's interpretation of the drawing. Figure 8 does show a bottom cap 72 comprising a base 74 with prong elements 76 extending therefrom. According to the teaching of Dickhart III, et al., however, such base 74 is round but is not donut shaped in that there is no hole in the center of the base and the prong elements 76 that extend from the base 74 are disposed at 90° from the base and between two sets of springs 64 and 62. The prong elements 76 are not disposed at an outer periphery of the base 74 since spring 64 is on the outside of such prong elements 76 and such spring 64 engages the outer periphery of the base 74. Since the prong elements 76 are disposed between the springs 64 and 62, the prong elements 76 engage such base member 74 at right angles and not at an angle

greater than 90° as is defined in the present invention. This is clearly evident in Figure 8. Further, Dickhart III, et al. teaches that the prong elements 76 include interconnecting convoluted sections 78. Also, Dickhart III, et al. teaches that when the cap elements are inserted, the projecting portions 76 and the convoluted portions 78 engage a number of the of the upper and lower coils of springs 62 and 64. (Column 3, lines 23-30).

There are no convoluted portions in the range spring dampener of the present invention as is clearly evident in Figure 5. Further the legs of the present invention do not engage two sets of springs but engages the range spring.

The present invention provides legs extending from an outer periphery of a donut shaped element wherein the predetermined angle between the legs and the donut shaped element is greater than 90°.

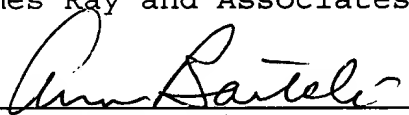
Further, Matthews et al. does not teach a damping device or suggest a need for one. There is no suggestion that the damping device as taught by Dickhart III, et al. could be used in a valve arrangement. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1-5 and 7-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Matthews et al. in view of Dickhart, III, et al.

In view of the discussion supra, it is believed that the invention as described in claims 1-5 and 7-20 is patentable and

that this application is now in condition for allowance and such allowance by the Examiner is respectfully requested.

In the event the Examiner has further difficulties with the examination and/or allowance of the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned agent for applicant by telephone at (412) 380-0725, if necessary, to resolve any remaining questions or issues by interview and/or Examiner's Amendment as to any matter.

Respectfully submitted,
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